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COMMANDERS DIGEST

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE • WASHINGTON, D.C.

Vol. 5, No. 24 March 15, 1969

1,500 Troops Flying From U.S. to Korea

About 1,500 paratroopers of the Army's 82nd Airborne Division will be airlifted to South Korea this month where they will join other U.S. and South Korean troops in maneuvers the Defense Department calls, "The longest airborne assault operation in history."

Starting on March 15 about 40 miles southeast of Seoul, an exercise called FOCUS RETINA will run until March 20 and involve about 7,000 Army, Air Force and Korean military personnel.

The 2nd Brigade of the 82nd Airborne Division, Ft. Bragg, N.C., consisting of two battalions and full combat support equipment, will deploy 8,500 miles from Pope AFB, N.C. to the exercise area.

FOCUS RETINA is a joint-combined strategic mobility exercise designed primarily to test the rapid reaction capability of United States-

(Continued on Page 2)

SET TO GO—Col. Felix A. (Doc) Blanchard, following vigorous plane-side dousing by the welcoming committee which greeted him after his last flight, takes his place for the traditional 388th Tactical Fighter Wing 100 mission parade around the base. He wears a scarf bearing the names of all his fellow 34th Tactical Fighter Squadron pilots who have completed 100 missions.

SecDef Seeks To Keep Public Fully Informed

Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird wants to make sure the American people are fully informed about matters of national defense and that the DOD conducts its activities in an open manner, consistent with the need for security.

Secretary Laird made his position clear March 4 in a memorandum to the Secretaries of the military departments; Chairman, JCS; Director of Defense Research and Engineering; Assistant Secretaries of Defense; Assistants to the Secretary of Defense, and Directors of the Defense agencies.

Explaining, he said, "This means that unclassified information, other than that exempted by the Freedom of Information Act, must be readily accessible to the public and the press."

Secretary Laird said he attached importance to the matter and that he wanted to state certain principles "which I expect to be followed in the

(Continued on Page 3)

Restoration Begins on Bikini Atoll

The Departments of Defense and Interior, plus the Atomic Energy Commission, have started the first phase of restoring Bikini Atoll, site of U.S. nuclear testing in 1946.

Men and equipment have arrived on Bikini to start the cleanup phase which is expected to take about six months and at a cost of $1.2 million.

The over-all resettlement program of about 550 Bikinians, who were moved to the islands, is expected to take six years and cost about $3 million. (See Photo, page 6)

DOD responsibility will be limited to the cleanup phase which includes removal of vegetative overgrowth, radioactive debris and unusable structures. AEC will be responsible for radiological safety. The Interior department will handle replanting of coconut trees, construction of housing and community facilities and the actual resettlement of the Bikinians.

The initial phase of the project will be to clean up the islands of Bikini and Enyu, both in the southeast part of the atoll. The atoll itself consists of a chain of large and small islands surrounding an oblong lagoon.

The Defense Atomic Support Agency has been named executive agency for DOD participation in the project. VAdmr. L. M. Mustin, DASA Director is the DOD project manager.

Over-all plans call for replanting of the islands with coconut trees and reconstruction of housing for the Bikinians on the islands. In addition, a village center will be built on the island, consisting of a school, dispensary, church and community facilities including warehousing.

1,500 Troops Flying From U.S. to Korea

(Continued from Page 1)

based Strike Command forces to deploy to the Pacific Command ready for tactical employment.

The CONUS-based deploying forces will move in two major elements, all airlifted by C-141 transports of the Military Airlift Command and C-130's of the Tactical Air Command.

One battalion of the 2nd Brigade, about 800 Army personnel and large amounts of support equipment will be airlifted from Pope AFB and airlanded in Korea for staging.

The second CONUS deployment will be an airlift of another airborne battalion of about 700 personnel complete with its heavy equipment and rigged for airdrop.

This second unit will be air-dropped directly into the objective area with stops enroute only for refueling, the first time that U.S. airborne forces have been deployed intercontinentally by strategic airlift and dropped directly into the exercise area.

After staging, the first unit will join the second in the parachute assault and link up with the U.S. Forces Korea Brigade consisting of one U.S. infantry battalion of the 7th Infantry Division, two Republic of Korea infantry battalions, one ROK Special Forces Group, and appropriate combat and combat service support units.

Lead elements of the CONUS deployment will depart March 9, followed by the second elements March 14.

The total CONUS deploying force will be 77 MAC and TAC airlift aircraft and 2,500 U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force personnel with full combat support equipment.

Tactical air support for the exercise will be provided by U.S. Air Force tactical air fighter and reconnaissance units based in Korea. During the exercise, all participating forces will be supplied entirely by airdrop.

PROMOTION—Gen. Earle G. Wheeler, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, promotes Steward First Class Juan Mangosing, USN, to the grade of Chief Steward. In attendance are (left to right) VAdm. Nels C. Johnson, Director, Joint Staff; Gen. Leonard F. Chapman, Jr., Commandant, U. S. Marine Corps; SDC Mangosing, Steward to Joint Chiefs of Staff; Adm. Thomas H. Moorer, Chief of Naval Operations; Gen. William C. Westmoreland, Chief of Staff, U. S. Army; Gen. Wheeler, and Gen John P. McConnell, Chief of Staff, U. S. Air Force.

DoD Asks Selective Service for Doctors

The Department of Defense has requested the Selective Service System to provide 437 doctors of medicine, 23 doctors of osteopathy and 25 optometrists for active duty, beginning in July.

All of the physicians and osteopaths will serve with the Army, the 25 optometrists with the Air Force, to meet the projected losses in FY 1970.

The number of physicians being called this year is fewer than any call since 1962. The last seven have been in excess of 1,000. DOD says the smaller call is related to the stabilization of the buildup of forces associated with the Vietnam war and with the large number of volunteers who enter the military service through the Berry Plan.

This plan provides for the early commissioning in the Reserve of recent medical school graduates and predetermines their date of going on active duty. They go in either immediately following internship, following one year of additional training, or as specialists upon completion of a full training program in one of the specialties of medicine. A similar program exists for osteopathic school graduates.

COMMANDERS DIGEST

THIS PUBLICATION CONTAINS OFFICIAL INFORMATION, NEWS AND POLICY, DIRECT FROM WASHINGTON AUTHORIZED SOURCES.

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SecDef Seeks to Keep Public Informed

(Continued from Page 1)

conduct of public affairs activities of this Department:

"1. Our first concern must be the security of the United States and the safety of our armed forces. Therefore, information which would adversely affect the security of our country or endanger our men should not be disclosed.

"2. The provision of the Freedom of Information Act (5 USC 552) will be supported in both letter and spirit.

"3. No information will be classified solely because disclosures might result in criticism of the Department of Defense. To avoid abuse of classification procedures, we must adhere strictly to the criteria set forth in Executive Order 10501.

"4. Our obligation to provide the public with accurate, timely information on major Department of Defense programs will require, in some instances, detailed public information planning and coordination within the Department and with other government agencies. However, I want to emphasize that the sole purpose of such planning and coordination will be to expedite the flow of information to the public. Propaganda has no place in the Department of Defense information programs.

"Therefore, I direct that each addressee review all pertinent directives, policies and public information plans to insure prompt and complete compliance with these principles. Those which do not meet the foregoing criteria will be revised or rescinded," Secretary Laird told the addressees.

The Executive Order referred to by Secretary Laird spells out how official information, in the interests of the defense of the United States, will be safeguarded. Section 1 of the Executive Order lists the classification categories and states that "official information which requires protection in the interests of national defense shall be limited to three categories of classification, which in descending order of importance shall carry one of the following designations: Top Secret, Secret, or Confidential."

Also, the order states that no other designation shall be used to classify defense information, including military information, as requiring protection in the interests of national defense, except as expressly provided by statute.

The Order defined the three categories as follows:

1. **Top Secret:** Except as may be expressly provided by statute, the use of the classification Top Secret shall be authorized, by appropriate authority, only for defense information or material which requires the highest degree of protection. The Top Secret classification shall be applied only to that information or material the defense aspect of which is paramount, and unauthorized disclosure of which could result in exceptionally grave damage to the Nation such as leading to a definite break in diplomatic relations affecting the defense of the United States, an armed attack against the United States or its allies, a war, or the compromise of military or defense plans, or intelligence operations, or scientific or technological development vital to the national defense.

2. **Secret:** Except as may be expressly provided by statute, the use of the classification Secret shall be authorized, by appropriate authority, only for defense information or material the unauthorized disclosure of which would result in serious damage to the Nation such as jeopardizing the international relations of the United States, endangering the effectiveness of a program or policy of vital importance to the national defense, or compromising important military or defense plans, scientific or technological developments important to national defense, or information revealing important intelligence operations.

3. **Confidential:** Except as may be expressly provided by statute, the use of the classification Confidential shall be authorized, by appropriate authority, only for defense information or material the unauthorized disclosure of which could be prejudicial to the defense interests of the nation.

Acoustic Chamber Now in Operation

See Photo At Right

A towering structure in which spacecraft and missiles can be tested severely—by sound waves—goes into full operation this month at Lockheed's plant at Sunnyvale, Calif.

In the foreground is one of the horns which create sound as high as 153 decibels to shake spacecraft and rockets under conditions similar to those they would encounter in passing through earth's atmosphere.

These noise values can be grasped by noting that a jet airliner taking off 200 feet away transmits 122 decibels into the human ear, while a large rocket engine blasting off might register up to 160.

Each of the two big sliding concrete doors on the large test chamber weighs 600,000 pounds. The large cell can accommodate vehicles and spacecraft up to 22 feet in diameter and 70 feet long.

The Paris Peace Talks

VIETNAM: SAIGON'S POSITION

At the first session of the "new" Paris peace talks on January 25 the chiefs of the four delegations—North Vietnam, the National Liberation Front, South Vietnam and the U.S.—presented their initial positions.

The opening statement of South Vietnam was delivered by Ambassador Pham Dang Lam. Below are excerpts from his statement. (For the opening statements of the other delegations, see COMMANDERS DIGEST of: February 22—the U.S.; March 1—the NLF; and March 8—Hanoi.)

This meeting is a meeting between two sides, the side of the aggressor—the administration of North Vietnam and its auxiliary organizations in the South—and the side of the victim of aggression, that is to say, the Republic of Vietnam (RVM) and its allies.

The presence of the delegation of the Republic of Vietnam at this meeting does not imply that the Government of the Republic of Vietnam recognizes the Communist regime of North Vietnam and the so-called National Liberation Front of South Vietnam.

I believe that no one is more competent to present the problem of restoring peace than the Government of the Republic of Vietnam, the only elected, legal, and legitimate government of the people of South Vietnam.

Just as international opinion and the conscience of people throughout the world do, we hate and condemn war. More than anyone else, we aspire to a prompt return to peace in our beloved fatherland.

It is precisely because of this deep aspiration that we are present here, ready to engage in serious discussions with the representatives of the Hanoi Administration, which is directly responsible for this war of aggression directed against the Republic of Vietnam.

The Communist side must not be misled by our desire for peace but must have the courage to look squarely at the truth and recognize that it has failed in its designs of aggression and annexation of South Vietnam.

The peace of which we are speaking here must be a just and lasting peace and not a false and unstable peace which bears the seed of still more murderous conflicts for future generations.

Origin of the War

The Vietnamese people were among the first to raise the banner of independence within the movement of liberation of the colonized peoples of Asia and of Africa.

[But] the Communist leaders in the north have turned our national resistance movement into a war for international communism. They put the sacrifices of the Vietnamese in the service of Communist expansion in Southeast Asia.

At a time when the situation called for close unity among all of the Vietnamese to win independence, the Communist leaders did not hesitate to impose an infinitely disastrous party dictatorial policy. Their proclaimed dissolution of the Indochinese Communist Party in 1945 was but a maneuver designed to mislead public opinion because, in fact, the Communist leaders had retained intact the structure of their party organization and used it to monopolize political power and enlarge their domination over all the country.

Communist Terror Tactics

They savagely murdered illustrious patriots. . . . They attempted to systematically destroy Nationalist Parties such as Dai Viet, Viet Quoc. . . . etc. Faithful to their atheistic ideology, they have sought by all possible means to undermine religious forces. They terrorized and persecuted the Cao Dai, Hoa Hao, Buddhists and Catholics, going so far as to murder in cold blood the founder of the Hoa Hao religion.

Finally, they unleashed a class struggle movement and deliberately sowed hatred and dissension in our society, which had never known conflict between the different social groups.

Putting the communizing of the country ahead of the struggle for independence, the Communist leaders did not even hesitate in 1946 to enter into a pact with the colonialists so as to have a free hand and be able to liquidate the nationalist elements, while at the same time strengthening the machinery of their party.

Under the hypocritical slogan of land reform, they launched on a vast denunciation campaign and massacred hundreds of thousands of innocent compatriots, without even sparing those who had become illustrious in the resistance movement.

In order to disguise their war of aggression, they mobilized the entire Communist propaganda apparatus in the world . . . for the purpose of misleading world opinion on the true nature of the Communist war of aggression in Vietnam. They have represented this war as a national liberation movement.

The NLF: Hanoi's Front Organization

On December 20, 1960, the so-called National Liberation Front of South Vietnam came into being in Hanoi. The Communist regime of North Vietnam has never ceased to

represent the "Front" as a spontaneous, popular organization in South Vietnam. But the irrefutable truth is that the so-called NLF is a mere screen for the North Vietnamese Communist Party, which is to say an instrument of the Hanoi authorities.

Everyone knows that the "Central Office for South Vietnam" (COSVN) is the brain-center of all political and military activities of the insurgent organization in the South. The COSVN [is] . . . nothing more than a section of the North Vietnamese Lao Dong Party.

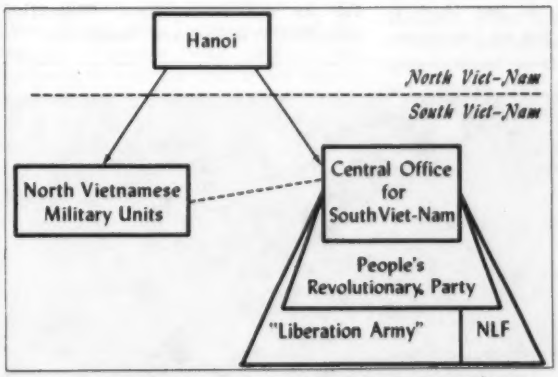
This subordination to the Lao Dong Party was so obvious that in December 1961, that is to say one year after the creation of the "NLF," the section of the Communists of North Vietnam operating in the south was compelled to give itself another name: "People's Revolutionary Party."

According to a document of the Lao Dong Party dated December 7-8, 1961, which was seized in Ba Xuyen Province, . . . the creation of the People's Revolutionary Party was just a subterfuge designed to deceive public opinion and gain the sympathy of the neutralist nations of Southeast Asia.

According to the same document, the People's Revolutionary Party and the Lao Dong Party represent . . . one and the same Party, "united from north to south under the leadership of the Central Presidium of the Party."

This fact did not escape the International Control Commission in Vietnam, [which] . . . denounced the Lao Dong Party by name for having created and directed the NLF in its activities aimed at the overthrow by force of the Government of the Republic of Vietnam.

The situation in Vietnam is identical with the situation in two other divided countries: Korea and Germany. . . . What would happen in Europe if East German troops were to invade West Germany or West Berlin? Would anyone dare maintain that this is only an internal matter, that the East German soldier has the right to fight in any part of German territory?



ORGANIZATION OF COMMUNIST-DIRECTED FORCES IN SOUTH VIETNAM. The chain of command from Hanoi to the two types of Communist-directed forces in South Vietnam is shown above. Hanoi's political field headquarters in the South is the Central Office for South Vietnam (COSVN). In general, under its control, the People's Revolutionary Party provides political direction and enforces control; members of the "Liberation Army" conduct terror and military operations; and the National Liberation Front (NLF) serves as a propaganda unit. Collectively these forces are known as the Viet Cong.

(Adapted from the U.S. Department of State's "Viet-Nam Information Notes" series, No. 3, "Communist-Directed Forces in South Viet-Nam.")

A Test For International Communism

The armed invasion of South Vietnam constitutes a test for the methods of conquest of Southeast Asia designed by international communism. It is precisely because they were aware of that reality that the Republic of Korea, Thailand, the Philippines, Australia, New Zealand and the USA answered the appeal made by the RVN and sent troops to South Vietnam to help us repel the armed agression coming from the North.

I turn to your side to ask you, where do you stand now?

From a military standpoint, Communist forces in the South have been faced with such difficulties that to fill their ranks they have had to enlist by force or by deception thirteen-and-fourteen year-old children and to send armed women into battle. . . .

That is the situation of what your side calls "the Great Front." As to what you call "the Great Rear" of the war of aggression against South Vietnam, you cannot conceal what is taking place there: the population of the North lives in misery and is destitute. You are forcing it to contribute its blood to an unjust and hopeless war.

That is why in the North the opposition to your totalitarian and aggressive policy has extended to all classes of society. To face the situation your leaders had to adopt a decree in November 1967 . . . which provides for death penalties and imprisonments against opponents. This drastic text lists fifteen cases of offense. These have been defined in such broad terms that they encompass in reality all opponents to the Party and regime. No doubt this barbarous repression is what has saved the Communist administration of the North from disintegration.

Your Own Conscience

Question your own conscience. Think of the future of our home country. Think of the future opportunities for generations to come. Be courageous enough to renounce your imperialistic dream of communization of Vietnam. Abandon your designs to turn our people into the vanguard troops of international communism.

Put an end to this bloody aggression so that all the citizens of Vietnam, born of the same earth, born of the same race, may together build a genuine and a durable peace.

'Peace' Is Key Word for Secretary Laird

Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird considers his new job and its success "will be measured on the basis of whether this nation is able to restore peace and is able to maintain peace."

The job of secretary of defense, he told the Wisconsin Broadcasters' Assn., in Milwaukee Feb. 25, should be judged on the basis of whether an individual in that job in his term of office is able not only to restore peace but to maintain peace. "Because the strongest influence the Department of Defense can have upon our lives is the peacemaker role," said Mr. Laird, "and the dollars that we invest in the Department of Defense, as taxpayers in this country, should be wasted dollars."

Appearing before the Broadcasters' Assn. to receive the "Man of the Year" in Wisconsin award, Secretary Laird said "now that may seem strange to many of you, but I hope that the dollars that are invested in the Department of Defense are wasted dollars, because if every dollar that's invested in the Department of Defense in the next few years is a wasted dollar, that will mean that this nation is able to restore peace and maintain peace."

Continuing his explanation, Secretary Laird said "the dollar that is invested in the Department of Defense is merely an insurance policy as to whether this nation will be able to keep out of a major conflagration as far as the Soviet Union is concerned, and as far as Red China and any other nation in the world is concerned.

"And so, when people talk to me about wasting dollars in the Department of Defense, I hope that the weapons systems, the arms, the munitions, and the tanks, and the other weapons that we invest in, that you invest in as the citizens of this country, will never have to be used in actual combat, because that's the kind of insurance that you're investing in your defense budget in the United States of America."

The former representative from the State of Wisconsin said "we are engaged in major competition with the Soviet Union in this year of 1969. For the last four years the United States has been tied down in a bloody, jungle war in Southeast Asia, where tonight we have over 547,000 of the finest citizens of America.

"This war," Secretary Laird continued, "has cost us dearly from the standpoint of casualties on the battlefield. It is running at the rate right now of over 200 American lives a week. In the last 48 hours, we have lost over 175 Americans in Southeast Asia. This is the greatest cost of this war, the casualties that have been suffered by America's young men who have been assigned to this responsibility."

In addition to that, he said, "we have invested over $30 billion a year. And this investment has drained the American taxpayer. It has been a tremendous load as far as our country is concerned. Eighty percent of the support in Southeast Asia in the Vietnamese war as far as North Vietnam is concerned has been provided by the Soviet Union. And this 80 percent support in terms of dollars and cents amounts to a little over a billion and a half to the Soviet Union.

"But it has forced the United States to make tremendous sacrifices, not only as far as our young men are concerned, but it has forced us to invest this $30 billion a year, while the Soviet Union was able to go forward with an ever-increasing buildup in the field of strategic offensive and defensive weapons during this last 36 months."

The Secretary said the Russians are in a position today where they are catching up, as far as the U.S. submarine fleet is concerned, and that by 1974 they will have caught up as far as the Polaris-type submarine launched missiles are concerned.

LONG AGO—This nuclear test blast was made on Bikini Atoll in 1946. That isolated atoll in the Pacific is now being restored and the former inhabitants will be returned to their old homesite. (See story on page 1.)

DRAFT PROPOSALS EXPLAINED

Changes in the present draft system could result from what President Richard M. Nixon has referred to as the short-term problem of draft inequity.

The proposals were explained at Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird's news conference Feb. 18. Following is the narration from briefing material presented to newsmen by Vice Admiral William Mack, Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs.

The total number of men in the prime draft age group, 19-25 years, has increased very rapidly in the past decade. Mainly due to this population growth, the percentage of men needed for service has declined sharply. Ten years ago fully 70 per cent of all men reaching age 26 had seen military service.

At present this percentage is less than 50 per cent. Looking beyond the current Vietnam war period, our projections indicate that if we return to previous force levels, only one out of seven of the young men who are qualified and available for service and who have not volunteered, will be needed for induction.

With a large and growing supply of manpower, draft deferments were broadened in many ways, beginning in the late 1950's. The result of these past policies was to create a very uneven incidence of military service among young men with different economic and social backgrounds.

Based on the experience of men who had recently completed their age period of service liability, only 27 per cent of those with graduate study, and only 30 per cent of those with less than eight years of schooling, had seen military service as compared to 74 per cent of those with only a high school diploma.

One of the most severe indictments of recent draft policies was that those groups of men best qualified to serve and who had received the greatest benefits from our society had, in fact, served the least.

NEW ASSIGNMENT—President Nixon named Maj. Gen. Oren E. Hurlbut, U. S. Army, for assignment as Army member, Joint Logistic Review Board, a newly established position, and for appointment to the grade of lieutenant general. Gen. Hurlbut is now Commanding General, United States Army Weapons Command, Rock Island Arsenal, Ill.

These issues were, of course, thoroughly reviewed in the last several years by the Marshall Commission, by the panel headed by General Mark Clark, and by the Congress.

Although the Congress authorized a continuation of deferments for college undergraduates until age 24, it pointed to a very stringent policy of limitation of subsequent deferments for graduate study, except if such deferments were clearly essential in the national interest. Under the revised law, and under guidance provided by the National Security Council last year, provision was made to discontinue further deferments for graduate study, beginning this fall, except in medicine, dentistry, and certain allied health fields.

All of the studies of the draft had also agreed on the general proposition that the existing procedure under which liable men in the 19-25 year age group are selected in order of age, oldest man first, is undesirable. This has caused years of uncertainty for many of these young men, making career planning difficult for them, and in general creating tensions and vexations which could be avoided.

The alternative was to move to what I shall describe as a modified age class system. Under this procedure young men would be most vulnerable to the draft for a 12-month period, either at about their 20th year or immediately following college graduation. If they were not reached for induction during that period, their draft liability would be effectively ended, except in emergency situations.

Although the Congress endorsed this principle of the system and authorized the placing of draft calls by age class, it specifically prohibited changing the present procedure of calling the oldest men first within any age class or age group. This proved to be an insurmountable hurdle in attempts to initiate the age class selection system.

Since college graduates are typically older than other draft available men, there has been considerable concern that the oldest-first procedure would result in a very heavy concentration of college graduates in draftee deliveries.

Inductions of college graduates actually have increased only moderately since last summer; from five per cent of all draftees last year to 16 per cent in the first half of the current fiscal year. However, there is every reason to believe that this percentage will increase sharply in the coming year for two reasons.

1—Many college graduates have not yet been reclassified and examined, but are likely to reach this stage in the next few months.

2—General Hershey authorized the Boards to postpone inductions of graduate students until the end of the semester during which they first receive their draft notice.

Defense Chiefs Are Concerned About Prisoners

The Defense Department's two highest ranking officials are "deeply concerned" about the welfare of captured U.S. servicemen and those who have been listed as missing in action. Also, they are equally concerned with the welfare of the families of these servicemen.

In a Mar. 1 memorandum to the separate services, JCS, ASD (M&RA) and the Chairman of the Defense Department Prisoner of War Policy Committee, Secretary Melvin R. Laird said "Deputy Secretary (of Defense) (David) Packard and I are deeply concerned about the welfare of our captured American servicemen and those who have been listed as missing in action. The welfare of their families is of equal concern to us."

Secretary Laird then noted that the enemy in Southeast Asia continues to disregard the humanitarian protection guaranteed by the Geneva Convention relative to the treatment of prisoners of war, and then added: "Our men are being denied basic rights, including the right of their families to know that they are captured, the right to correspond freely with their families and the right of impartial inspection of prisoner of war compounds."

He said he was aware that many persons and agencies within the Government have been working diligently to improve the welfare of our captured servicemen and to obtain their release. "Nevertheless," he said, "I believe that we must strengthen our efforts on behalf of these Americans and their families.

"I want to be assured that the Military Services and the Office of the Secretary of Defense are doing all that we possibly can for the next of kin. If our present legal authority to assist these families is inadequate, please advise me immediately."

The Secretary of Defense said he had directed the chairman of defense prisoner of war policy committee to coordinate a new review of policies and practices to ensure that these families are receiving all assistance to which they are entitled.

NEW POST—Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird administers the oath of office to Dr. G. Warren Nutter, Assistant Secretary of Defense (International Security Affairs), as Deputy Secretary of Defense David Packard looks on. Dr. Nutter was formerly Chairman of the Department of Economics and Director of the Thomas Jefferson Center at the University of Virginia.

Schools Asked to Delay ROTC Action

Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird has asked several universities not to take any action they may have contemplated regarding their ROTC programs until there has been a thorough review of possible problem areas.

Secretary Laird's thoughts on the ROTC programs in colleges were transmitted in a letter dated Feb. 15 to nine universities throughout the U.S.

"As a result of recent press reports," Secretary Laird's letter began, "I am most concerned over actions being contemplated by some of our leading universities to withdraw the granting of degree credit for certain ROTC courses now offered in the curriculums.

"My primary concern is that such actions will tend to degrade career military service as an honorable profession and the resultant serious implications with respect to the future of our officer corps—and indeed the Nation's security."

Secretary Laird said he considered that any such actions taken unilaterally by the host institutions in this regard would be premature and unwise.

"The ROTC program is essential," Secretary Laird continued, "in producing a major portion of the commissioned officers and future leaders for our Armed Forces—both the regular and reserve components.

"Therefore, I consider it vitally important that their education in the military arts and sciences and in other disciplines be the very best that can be provided.

"I particularly desire that the ROTC curriculums developed by the Departments of the Army, Navy and Air Force be at an educational level which is on a par with the university curriculums in other major fields—and to be recognized as such by being granted appropriate degree credit."

Secretary Laird said the Department of Defense stands ready at any time to coordinate with those institutions having ROTC programs in resolving any problems, current or potential, and would welcome their ideas and assistance.

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